

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A voltage level detector (8) activates itself through monitoring the voltage level (V_{STB}) at a standby pin (5) during power-up of an audio power amplifier (10), and can detect fault conditions of an output block (2), such as a short to ground at an output terminal (3), in contrast to conventional protection circuits that can operate only after power-up. In a voltage level detector (8), a second short-to-ground detection block (81) monitors the voltage levels (V_{STB} and V_{out}) at the standby pin (5) and the output terminal (3) during power-up. Upon detection of the voltage level (V_{STB}) reaching a first threshold level (V_{th1}) and a short to ground at the output terminal (3), the second short-to-ground detection block (81) activates a cutoff signal generating block (83). The recovery block (82) monitors the voltage level (V_{STB}) at the standby pin (5) during power-up. Upon detection of the voltage level (V_{STB}) reaching a second threshold level ($V_{th2} > V_{th1}$), the recovery block (82) deactivates the cutoff signal generating block (83). The cutoff signal generating block (83) sends a cutoff signal (Sc) to a protection switch block (71) as a request for turn-off of protection switches (7A) on activation, and on the other hand, terminates the sending of the cutoff signal (Sc) on deactivation.